

House Health and Government Operations Committee
Senate Bill 440 – Commission to Study the Health Care Workforce Crisis in Maryland – Establishment
March 22, 2022
Support with Amendments

The National Association of Social Workers - Maryland Chapter (NASW) support with amendments *Senate Bill 440- Commission to Study the Health Care Workforce Crisis in Maryland – Establishment*.

NASW supports the creation of this Commission because Maryland is experiencing a serious shortage of behavioral health providers. We believe that the state should engage in an analysis of the many different options that have been proposed to address the provider shortage. The Senate amended the bill in a way that removes behavioral health providers from the commission.

We suggest amendments to conform SB 440 to HB 625. HB 625 included behavioral health providers and also expanded the work of the commission to ensure the commission is considering the shortages that exists in a variety of settings.

We would also suggest this second amendment:

On Page 5 after Line 34 insert:

“(3) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION, THE COMMISSION SHALL INCLUDE IN ITS FIRST REPORT A DISCUSSION OF THE OPTIONS FOR USING TEMPORARY LICENSURE, OR OTHER MECHANISMS, TO EXPEDITE THE ENTRY OF RECENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH GRADUATES INTO THE WORKFORCE OR TO ADDRESS LICENSURE DELAYS”

With these amendments we believe the commission could go a long way to address the state’s shortage of behavioral health providers. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Scott Tiffin at stiffin@policypartners.net or (443) 350-1325